IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1-3, 10-15, 18 and 19 and ADD new claim 20 in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A data converter connectable to and disconnectable from an external device so as to allow data exchange between the data converter and the external device, the data converter comprising:

a data conversion unit ~~to encrypt and decrypt data~~configured to encrypt data generated in the external device and return the encrypted data thereto when receiving the generated data transmitted from the external device, and to decrypt the encrypted data and return the decrypted data to the external device when receiving the encrypted data from the external device;

~~a timer unit which counts time~~; and

a lock system ~~which~~ configured to locks a data conversion function of said data conversion unit in a disabled state ~~and prevents data encryption and decryption, based on the time counted by said timer unit~~after a passage of a predetermined period of time so as to prevent said data conversion unit from encrypting and decrypting the data.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The data converter as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a lock release system ~~which~~ configured to releases ~~a~~ the lock on the data conversion function set by said lock system so that the data conversion function is set in an enabled state.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The data converter as claimed in claim 2, wherein said lock release system comprises:

a data input unit through which identification data is input;

a recording unit ~~which~~ configured to records reference data for identification used to release the lock on the data conversion function; and

a control unit ~~which~~ configured to collates the identification data input from said data input unit with the reference data for identification, and releases the lock on the data conversion

function when the identification data is identical to the reference data for identification.

4. (ORIGINAL) The data converter as claimed in claim 3, wherein said data input unit is formed of entry keys by which numbers, letters, and signs are entered.

5. (ORIGINAL) The data converter as claimed in claim 3, wherein said data input unit is a plane coordinate input unit which is touched to allow input of data using coordinates of touched positions.

6. (ORIGINAL) The data converter as claimed in claim 3, wherein said data input unit is an input/display unit comprising:

a plane coordinate input panel which is transparent and is touched to allow input of data using coordinates of touched positions; and

a display which is provided on a rear side of said plane coordinate input panel to display numbers, letters, and signs.

7. (ORIGINAL) The data converter as claimed in claim 3, wherein said data input unit is a fingerprint input unit to which an image of a fingerprint of a user is input.

8. (ORIGINAL) The data converter as claimed in claim 7, wherein:

said fingerprint input unit comprises a fingerprint input screen to which the finger of the user is applied to input the fingerprint of the finger, the fingerprint input screen being divided into pixels to measure static electricity of each of the pixels so that the image of the fingerprint is input.

9. (ORIGINAL) The data converter as claimed in claim 7, wherein said fingerprint input unit comprises a fingerprint input screen to which the finger of the user is applied to input the fingerprint of the finger, and optically acquires the image of the fingerprint of the finger applied to the fingerprint input screen so that the image of the fingerprint is input.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The data converter as claimed in claim 2, wherein said lock release system comprises:

a recording unit ~~which~~ configured to records reference data for identification used to release the lock on the data conversion function; and

a control unit ~~which~~ configured to collate~~s~~ identification data which is input to and transmitted from ~~a computer~~ the external device connected to the data converter with the reference data for identification, and release~~s~~ the lock on the data conversion function when the identification data is identical to the reference data for identification.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The data converter as claimed in claim 10, wherein the ~~computer~~ external device includes an input unit through which the reference data for identification and the identification data are input.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The data converter as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a time setting unit ~~which~~ configured to allow a user to set~~s~~ ~~a waiting~~ the predetermined time period before the data conversion function is disabled.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The data converter as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a time setting unit ~~which~~ configured to allow a user to set~~s~~ ~~a waiting~~the predetermined time period before the data conversion function is disabled.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The data converter as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a display unit ~~which~~ configured to display~~s~~ whether said lock system is in operation.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The data converter as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a display unit ~~which~~ configured to display~~s~~ whether said lock system is in operation.

16. (CANCELED)

17. (CANCELED)

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~A computer system which prevents data leakage, the computer system~~ An electronic device for processing information, the electronic device comprising:

a computing part configured to generate and process data;

a storage part configured to store the data; and

a data converter comprising

a data conversion unit ~~to encrypt and decrypt data~~ configured to encrypt the data

generated in the computing part and return the encrypted data thereto so that the encrypted data is stored in the storage part when receiving the generated data transmitted from the computing part, and to decrypt the encrypted data and return the decrypted data to the computing part so that the decrypted data is processable in the computing part when receiving the encrypted data read from the storage part;

~~a timer unit which counts time;~~ and

a lock system ~~which~~ configured to ~~locks~~ a data conversion function of said data conversion unit in a disabled state after passage of a predetermined period of time so as to prevent said data conversion unit from encrypting and decrypting the data ~~and prevents data encryption and decryption, based on the time counted by said timer unit~~.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The ~~computer system~~electronic device as claimed in claim 18, wherein said data converter further comprises a lock release system ~~which~~ configured to releases ~~a~~ the lock on the data conversion function set by said lock system so that the data conversion function is set in an enabled state.

20. (NEW) The data converter as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a timer unit configured to count the predetermined period of time, wherein the predetermined period of time is time counted from one of a connection of the data converter to the external device and a beginning of a process performed on the external device.